

Message Text

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44

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00

NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 BIB-01 CU-02 SAM-01

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R 201033Z OCT 75

FM AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3972

SECDEF WASHDC

INFO USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

CINCUSAFE RAMSTEIN GER

USIA WASHDC

AFRTS LOS ANGELES CAL

7122 BRS LINDSEY AS GER

OSAF WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEHRAN 10258

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: MILI, IR, US

SUB: GOI PROPOSAL FOR JOINT OPERATION OF AFRTS

REFS: (A) TEHRAN 0794 (271205Z JAN 75); (B) TEHRAN 9267 DTG 210544Z

SPE 75)

1. IN COURSE OF CONVERSATION ON ANOTHER SUBJECT WITH USIS PAO AND IO, KAMBIZ MAHMOUDI, DEPUTY DIRECTOR GENERAL OF NIRT, DESCRIBED NIRT PLANS INITIATE ENGLISH LANGUAGE TELECASTING.

2. HE CONFIRMED REPORTS THAT NIRT WILL BEGIN DAILY BROADCASTING OCTOBER 26 ON ITS SECOND CHANNEL. INITIAL PROGRAMMING WILL BE FROM 4:30 PM TO 7:30 PM AND WILL BE BROADCAST IN SHIRAZ, ISFAHAN, ABADAN AND MASHAD AS WELL AS TEHRAN. THIS MEANS IT WILL COVER COUNTRY'S PRINCIPAL POPULATION CENTERS WITH EXCEPTION AZARBAIJAN.

3. MAHMOUDI SAID IT IS NIRT'S PLAN TO EXPAND DAILY PROGRAM HOURS INTO A FULL DAY OF "INTERNATIONAL" PROGRAMMING. EVENTUALLY NIRT
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MAY INCLUDE SOME FRENCH AND, POSSIBLY, GERMAN. THIS WOULD PROBABLY

BE IN NEWS PROGRAMS. INITIAL PROGRAMMING WILL INCLUDE ENTERTAINMENT (MEANING MAINLY SITUATION COMEDIES AND DRAMAS PURCHASED IN U.S. AND U.I.), ABC SPORTS (THEY WILL TRY TO GET U.S.PRO-FOOTBALL GAMES AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE FOLLOWING ACTUAL PLAY), EUROVISION AND LOCAL NEWS. CM

LDREN'S PROGRAMS WILL BE CONSIDERED LATER.

AMERICAN AND BRITISH ANNOUNCERS ARE BEING HIRED. WORLD NEWS WILL BE REPORTED WITH ACCENT ON U.S., U.K. AND OTHER ENGLISH SPEAKING NATIONS.

4. MAHMOUDI MADE IT CLEAR THAT NIRT WAS STARTING SLOWLY AND HAD GIVEN PROJECT GREAT DEAL OF CONSIDERATION BECAUSE NIRT DID NOT WANT GIVE IMPRESSION IT WAS COMPLETING WITH AFRT OR MOVING TO FORCE AFRT OFF AIR. HE SAID NIRT OFFICIALS FEARED THIS WOULD BE SEEN BY STUDENTS AND OTHERS WHO SEE AFRT NEWS AS MORE OF AN OPEN WINDOW TO THE WORLD AS AN EFFORT TO SHUT THAT WINDOW. CURRENT NIRT NEWS IN FARSI IS PALID AND SYCHOPHANTIC. MAHMOUDI SAID IT IS NIRT HOPE THAT NEWS ON ENGLISH PROGRAMS WILL BE MORE FORTHRIGHT THAN IS CASE WITH FARSI NEWS. NIRT HAS NO PLANS FOR ENGLISH-LANGUAGE RADIO BROADCASTING.

5. MAHMOUDI DID NOT BACK OFF FROM EARLIER CONVERSATION WITH PAO (REFTEL A) IN WHICH HE SUGGESTED USG CONSIDERATION OF SOME SORT OF COMBINED OPERATION WITH NIRT AND DESCRIBED NIRT'S EMBARRASSMENT AT HANDS OF COLLEAGUES FROM OTHER COUNTRIES WHO SOMETIMES REFER TO AFRT AS AN "OCCUPATION" STATION. MAHMOUDI, IN FACT, REPEATED THAT LATTER IS A CONTINUING CAUSE FOR CONCERN.

6. WHEN MAHMOUDI WONDERED ABOUT STATUS OF USG POSITION, PAO RESPONDED BY PROVIDING SUBSTANCE OF REFTEL (B) TO EFFECT THAT WE FEEL CONTINUING NEED FOR SUBSTANTIAL ENGLISH-LANGUAGE BROADCASTING FOR INCREASING NUMBER AMERICANS COMING TO IRAN, THAT WE UNABLE ENTER INTO JOINT VENTURE, THAT WE ARE PREPARED TO HAVE AFRT BROADCASTING CONTINUE UNTIL TIME WHEN NIRT CAN PROVIDE SUBSTITUTE PROGRAMMING.

7. MAHMOUDI SEEMED TO FIND ALL OF THIS ACCEPTABLE AND INDICATED NO URGENCY FOR ANY CHANGES IN AFRT. PAO NOTED THAT AFRT CURRENTLY AVERAGING ABOUT 80 HOURS OF WEEKLY TELECASTING. MAHMOUDI RESPONDED THAT WHEN NIRT LAUNCHES PROGRAMS OCTOBER 26 IT ACTUALLY WILL BE AIRING SIGNIFICANTLY MORE THAN 21 HOURS OF ENGLISH PER WEEK BECAUSE

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CONSIDERBLE NUMBER OF AMERICAN AND BRITISH MOVIES AND TV FILMS, WHICH ARE DUBBED IN FARSI, CAN ALSO BE HEARD SIMULTANEOUSLY IN ORIGINAL LANGUAGE THROUGH FM RADIO. HOWEVE, AT THIS TIME LATTER IS ONLY IN TEHRAN AREA.

8. MAHMOUDI SAID NIRT WILL CONDUCT RESEARCH ON VIEWER PRFERENCES AND ATTITUDES IN A FEW MONTHS. HE WILLING INCLUDE AMERICANS AND OTHER FOREIGN NATIONALS AMONG RESPONDENTS TO DETERMICE FEGREE TO

WHICH NIRT'S NEW ENGLISH TELECASTING IS MEETING THEIR NEDS.

COMMENT: IT CLEAR THAT NIRT FEELS RESPONSIBILITY PROVIDE
SUITABLE PROGRAMMING FOR LARGE INFLUX OF FOREIGNERS IT EXPECTS IN
NEXT FEW YEARS. IT LOGICAL ASSUME NIRT WILL SUGGEST CLOSING AFRT
WHEN IT HAS DEVELOPED ITS PROGRAMMING TO A POINT WHERE
IT VAN BE CONSIDERED SUITABLE REPLACEMENT.
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